USDA

United States
Department of
Agriculture

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Fact Sheet

**Producer Participation
in E-Government**

Farm Service Agency

**Montana State
Producer Handbook**

FSA

Background

USDA is making changes in the way it does business with its customers. One way is the Freedom to E-File Act, which requires USDA to provide information electronically to agricultural producers. E-Government is a way for the Farm Service Agency (FSA), the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), and Rural Development (RD) to provide information systems that allow customers to receive USDA services electronically. Currently, online forms are available for customers to fill out online and submit electronically, by mail, fax, or in person to the local USDA Service Center. Online forms are available on the Internet at: http://forms.sc.egov.usda.gov/eforms/mainservlet

Producer Participation

Producers interested in using e-file should log on to the USDA Website at: http://www.eauth.egov.usda.gov/eauthCreateAccount.html and read the information provided there. Instructions are available explaining what constitutes a Level 1 Account and a Level 2 Account, and how to use either of them.

Getting Started

Producers who want to conduct their business with USDA electronically using the Internet will need to have a Level 2

Account, which has a higher level of security.
The producer will then:
- Fill out the online registration form,
- Create a user ID and password
- Respond to the confirmation e-mail the system sends to you.

The producer will receive a confirmation email within a few days and **must** respond to that email. If the e-mail is not answered within 7 days, the entire process must be redone.

To complete the sign-up for the Level 2 Account, the producer must:

- Take an official identification (state ID, state driver's license, military ID, or passport to the local USDA Service Center
- Ask to see a Local Registration Authority (LRA) – a USDA employee who can certify your identity and activate your USDA eAuthentication Account
- Request that the LRA ensure that you have a record in the Service Center Customer Database (SCIMS).

The LRA (which is an USDA employee) will:
- Verify your identity against your official identification
- Activate your USDA eAuthentication Level 2 account;

- Check the SCIMS database for your customer record.

When registered, the customer has the ability to access on-line forms and submit them electronically to the USDA Service Center for processing. The customer also has the ability to attach additional files from their personal computer if needed for the form they are submitting.

1. When a form is completed and the customer feels comfortable with its accuracy, it may be submitted electronically to the Service Center of the customer's choice. When submitted, the customer will be shown a confirmation number. At this point the customer has successfully submitted a form to a service center. If the customer provided an email address, they will receive an email notification confirming their submission.
2. Once the form is received at the Service Center, it will be processed by a USDA employee. The employee will examine the submitted form to determine accuracy. If the form is accurate, the Service Center will notify the customer that the form has been accepted. If additional information is needed, the Service Center will notify the customer that additional information is needed.

Customer Statement

The Customer Statement allows farmers and ranchers un-precedented online access to their business activities with USDA. The Customer Statement allows USDA customers to view:

- Their participation, application and payment status in various commodity and conservation programs;
- Information on farm loans;
- Valuable information for tax season;
- See year-to-date 1099G information;
- View and print aerial photos of your land; and
- Conservation plan and land unit information.

The site is very secure. Your information is private. To protect your identity, the Customer Statement does not show your Social Security number or Taxpayer ID. Instead, your information is linked to your USDA ID which is created the first time you login to the Customer Statement.

Instructions for accessing your individual customer statement may be found on the Montana FSA Internet site at: http://www.fsa.usda.gov/mt. Under the "Online Services" section select View USDA Customer Statement.

Logging Into Your USDA Customer Statement

- Click the "Online Services" button on the homepage menu bar.
- Click on USDA Customer Statement under "Related Topics".
- Click on "login" on the menu bar at the top of the page.
- Enter your USDA eAuthentication Level 2 Account user ID and password on the USDA (security) login screen.
- On the first visit to the Customer Statement site, a unique USDA ID will be assigned and a unique USDA ID and a default profile for your Customer Statement will be created.

Additional Online Features with Level 2 Access

Financial Inquiries Web site

- Allows producers and other customers to generate reports showing their current and historical financial information related to FSA programs. Once a Level 2 eAuthorization account is activated, the customer may view summary and detailed information about specific payments received, collections paid, outstanding debt (excluding loans), and information reported on the 1099G form which reports the amount of payments received from USDA that are reported to the IRS.

Inquiries may be selected by date, program name, farm number, or financial institution account number. The site also contains links to more detailed information.

eDCP:

- Select payment options & assign crop shares;
- Sign and submit contracts via the Internet;
- View and print submitted contracts at any time.

eLDP:

- Receive approval and payment online;
- Direct deposit usually within 48 hours;
- Visit your local FSA office to request this service.

eGov vs. eLDP

E-Gov is a process that allows producers to access FSA forms and file applications electronically directly to a county FSA office. *E-LDP* is a process that allows producers to make applications for Loan Deficiency Payments (LDP) directly to the FSA office in Kansas City. *E-LDP* requires the participating FSA county office and producer to develop a producer profile in addition to registering with WebCAAF. The producer profile establishes eligibility requirements and limitations before the application arrives in Kansas City. Once FSA in Kansas City receives the application, payment is immediately sent from Kansas City to the producer.

Representative Link Management System (RLMS)

Allows an individual who represents an entity to conduct business for the entity in eGov. A representative who has an established role to conduct business for the entity has the same capability as an individual producer to conduct on-line business with FSA.

For More Information

Your local USDA Service can provide answers to your questions regarding the filing of USDA forms electronically or you can log on to the Montana FSA homepage at: http://www.fsa.usda.gov/mt